

My dear Gray -

Monday Morn. 22 May /48.

I wrote you a long letter on Friday, telling you that the "Article" was completed & should be sent to you towards the close of the present week - After dinner, of the same day, I set to work making fair copy, & bearing in mind how you would poor Sullivan for his MS. - at least 6 mos. before you needed it! I concluded, with respect to my own performance, that "If 'twere well done, when 'twere done - then, 'twere well it were done quickly!" Accordingly, I worked hard that night, & yesterday Morn. rose before the sun, & was actually writing before 6 o'clock! & from that time until 1/2 past 8 o'clock, in the event, I never laid down my pen - except for breakfast & tea - Dinner I had none - And as a consequence of all this labour - lo! you have my little offering to the science of Botany - laid at the feet of the High Priest of the American worshippers! "With reverence due & submission" - I resolved not to rest on Sat. night, until the last clause was copied; which having transcribed, I felt in the condition of the man, who, on finding the watch of his missing son, in the paunch of a shark, exclaimed - "How my hearts' at ease!" And now, before you begin to read, I may as well let you into the "Argument" of the very sublime composition that awaits your - unqualified commendations! Immediately on receipt of your letter, I went down to Wiley's & borrowed<sup>x</sup> of young Grant (for a single week) the last No. of the N. Am. Rev. that by copying out a page of the text, I might "take measure" for my effusion - On looking it over I noticed a short educational article (The Boston Pub. Schools) and as this fell in with the first part of my plan - which I previously named to you - I resolved - by incidental reference to it - to make <sup>mine</sup> ~~this~~ a sort of serial continuation of the subject, but with special application - My thoughts then taking this as the leading direction enabled me to write more freely on a subject we both have at heart - A higher standard of Botanical teaching - Better Books - & as a consequence - better tutors.

x This was a shabby enough beginning - but I could not afford to pay \$1.25 for the mere purpose of measuring my MS. with its type.



That was my design, & as I could conscientiously recommend, as  
tending to the end proposed, certain Books, enumerated at the end of  
the article - it suited my purpose well in other respects (!) But I  
have not "laid it on thick" - a la Holton - but, taken a bold author-  
itative position - & claimed to judge - ex cathedra! - for those who  
need the information - What is the right sort of teaching, & which  
are the Books to be used - I have incidentally given some roughish  
words to the dishonest Manual on desks, of a certain school, & if  
the N. Am. Rev. is a work of extended circulation & influence in  
the distant parts of the country - my article will do these gentry  
no good - while, incidentally, it may not hurt you, our friend  
W-2, will not admire it - I kind-o-guess - nor, perhaps, certain  
learned prop<sup>s</sup> whose recommend<sup>ns</sup> form part of <sup>his</sup> (stereotyped?)  
advertisements - I have rather walked into them - too, in a good-na-  
tured way - But it is necessary - When I first began to arrange  
my thoughts I found some difficulties to be encountered - The  
genera illust. could not, by any possibility, have been reviewed  
alone, except in a <sup>Review</sup> strictly confined to Nat. Science. That is quite  
certain - The "Manual", alone, would have been a very dry  
affair, but in connection with the "Text-Book" - the only one  
of the three, having really quotable & (general) reviewable  
matter - I have, I hope, managed to give prominence to them  
all - In fact, I take some credit to myself for the way  
in which I have snipped up the prefaces of the two intrac-  
tables - using the pieces as little gems to be set in my golden  
(don't say leaden, I pray you) frame work. There was literally  
no other quotable stuff about these two valuable books -  
You will see a hint I have thrown out (in perfect honesty)  
as to Acad.<sup>t</sup> Holt's taking the gen. illust. - I hope it may tend  
to "place" some copies - which I should like, on all accounts.  
The way I have managed the rich men - whilst rapping  
your knuckles for having a @ault as to their enlightened  
patronage - save the mark! is, I must needs think, clever, &  
I only hope you may think it as neatly expressed as it is  
ingeniously conceived - I have meant in this place to <sup>do</sup> a bit of

the eloquent! & have used my editorial "we" very patriotically!  
Alien-Englism human loquiter, grand indignant-american-literatus!  
Oh! my beloved public! How you are humbugged! But you like it -  
& use those best who squack you most! But my Sugar plums  
contain no poison - Swallow them, sweet public! without any fear  
of the Stomach-ache. My plan did not require any positive, dry  
botanical remarks, but I have purposely, & as a matter of policy  
thrown in 2 or 3 very short hints, (in as lively a way as one can  
play the Hurdy-gurdy over a dead Cat) - My reason being this -  
Whilst taking the high ground of the master, & telling the Country  
fellows what they are to teach, & how they are to set about it,  
- both very needful - I wished to anticipate the ready query  
of "who made thee a judge"? by throwing in a word <sup>or two</sup> on sub-  
jects they would not understand, by way of evidence, that, if it  
suited us, "we" could talk some Botany they have not yet learned.  
I thought this necessary, & hope I have not dropped in my "Ols."  
otherwise than as a sort of botanical exuberance - It seemed  
incumbent <sup>on me</sup> to notice the Musci & the Carices (!) as the work  
of alien hands - The last was a ticklish job - I hope you will think  
"we" have done fair justice to the author, & the subject - I  
made this a peg to hang one of my botan<sup>t</sup> quiddities upon -  
twice, as we know, "a man writes ~~down the course~~ <sup>all the better</sup> for having some  
little knowledge of the subject on which he treats". You will notice  
a rather long quotation from a ladies' lecture of Darlington's & it  
arose in this way - After I had written my article, (measuring  
as I thought, not exceeding 21 pages) it occurred to me that I had not  
made any mention of the Sex - excepting once, & then only inciden-  
tally, as a tottler in the woods - & I immediately said with dear  
friend Whistcraft "a fault like this must be amended" - when  
~~remembered~~ <sup>I remembered</sup> that I ~~received~~ <sup>received</sup> from our friend Darlington 2  
Apr. ago - some talk which he did up for the dear Creatures of  
Wilmington, & I thought that a little pithy extract, if I could find  
one, would serve my turn, & save fresh brain-spinning. But



on reading the lecture I was struck with his - rather elegant -  
style; & above all with the fact that his teachings were very  
similar indeed to my own - so much so, indeed, that oddly  
enough, I had to expunge one of my own previously written  
sentences as being almost literally his words! It shows, at any  
rate, that there may be very unconscious plagiarism - ~~which~~  
~~occurred in the~~ <sup>being</sup> lecture (printed by request & not  
published) I thought that what I could not but ~~consider~~ <sup>consider</sup> good mat-  
ter, well exposed, would be new to the readers of N. Am. Rev.  
& answer my purpose especially well. I therefore wrote a-  
bout 6 introductory lines, & inserted about 3 pages - of our  
friend (Darlington's) talk - in a very good, apropos place -  
This, therefore, has swelled the article to - possibly 25 pages -  
but I suspect not exceeding 23 or 24. However I am a bad  
judge, & if they will not take it as it stands, I suppose the  
extract from Darlington, & my short introduction to it  
must be suppressed - but I would rather have it stand -  
unless indeed, you think I have no right to take such a  
liberty with a privately printed work - which I submit  
to you - to me it seems all right, in the way I have done  
it - I do not see how my own matter can be much  
curtailed without obscuring the connection of the remarks,  
which in a review I think important - However, if as  
I have said, I am to be fitted to my Procrustean Bed, I must  
beg you to see that they do not cut off my head if too long,  
nor draw out my entrails into mere fiddle-strings, if too short.  
In fact, since better may not be, I even commit the deed  
wanting to your cherishing arms - but the authority I  
give you over it, is confined to combing the hair, & trimming  
the nails - (if need be, which I greatly doubt!) but I positively  
refuse you <sup>permission</sup> to exercise the inhuman craft of the Indian  
(Flat-head) Mother, by squeezing its head into an unnatural  
shape.

It was impossible to say anything of "The Flora" in connection with my general design, but I have "touched it off" in a few lines at the close - currente calamo - & I hope to your satisfaction - look carefully over the extracts from your works, to see they are verbatim, as I have had no one to read over the copy to me, whilst I compared it - You have now, thank God, some one at hand to do this for you - I hope you will find few errors in copying - but I was writing by steam! I dare say it will seem odd to you that the composition & transcribing of this small matter should have taken me 5 whole days & 1 evening! but I assure it is a literal fact - & I have set very close at it too - I hope the general strain of the article will be pleasing to you, tho' I, of course understand, that your conceit will affirm that you could have managed the detail far better - respecting which, I shall only say - & it is a serious truth - that I have taken a good deal of pains with it, that it might subserve the two ends I have had in view - to write up Bolany, & make my friends' books go down with the public, as one of the best means of improvement - I allow myself to hope that the article may conduce a little both ways. I have also endeavoured to give our friend Sprague a "Shave" he being certainly one of that description of Christians for whom old R. Baxter, thought such discipline desirable - I have further expayed to make your peace as to change of names, in the Manual, with our friends Short - Partwell - Dewey? &c. &c. - If they read what I have written & understand it, you will probably be saved some explanatory letters - In fact, you will see several little matters, which, (being behind the scenes) you will understand better than the "general reader" - You will notice the remarks about Synon? - I refer to such as our last grand friends.



When I commenced this letter, I intended to send it by mail that it might serve to "render advice" of the article which comes to you, by Adams' Express. But I have concluded that they shall travel together - to save you 5¢! I say to myself - He is now married! & these same 5¢ may serve to buy dear Jeanine a pair of shoe-strings - or, at all events, it will serve as a good practical hint to him that he is no longer to play the reckless & extravagant Bachelor - wrapping a quire of paper around a single Nosegay! (vide Mrs Dixwell on extravagance, p. 10) - It will therefore be incumbent upon you to give me the earliest information of the safe arrival of my package, to prevent the (inevitable!) 5-pennyworth of enquiry which will otherwise be rapping at your doors - And, after all - look at this long letter! which has taken me 2 or 3 hours to write. Is it not, in the abstract, deserving of some notice? Whereas I seldom receive anything more than the amount of ink, requiring to be absorbed prior to wiping the pen for graver matters - I do not say, more valued correspondents (for I am not jealous - & believe myself to have my full share of your epistolary courtesies -) But you are so busy - No doubt - but am not I also a public teacher! & an author!!? But you are also in love! Ah! that I am not - but - I wish I was! and above all were myself beloved!! Only one word more - & I have done - If, when my package arrives, you should be

in one of your ordinary (!) crusty - snarly - cynical humours - I forbid your cutting the envelope of my Miss. until you have been into the parlour, & sat with dear lady Jane - for at least 1/2 an hour - that you may imbibe enough of the properties of the *Eugenia scavissima* (candour & sweetness) to do justice to my labours, which I do not want to have scrawled over - in pencil - with - Bah! more grays! -

You can introduce yourself, on the occasion somewhat after this manner - Mr C. - sends his best love to you, dear, & says that if your household cares are not too pressing at the moment, you will devote 1/2 an hour to putting me into a good humour! - And - immediately after the mollifying process, retire to your study - lock yourself in, & see whether a literary treat (!) does not await you - that's all - First get rid of the bile, & then enjoy the feast! Roman fashion -

M. Affy  
N. Am. Reviewer

Dr Gray